



4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities--Captioned and Described Educational Media

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

Overview Information:

Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities--Captioned and Described Educational Media

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2016.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:  
84.327N.

Dates:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 120 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

## Full Text of Announcement

### I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purposes of the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities Program are to: (1) improve results for students with disabilities by promoting the development, demonstration, and use of technology; (2) support educational activities designed to be of educational value in the classroom for students with disabilities; (3) provide support for captioning and video description that is appropriate for use in the classroom; and (4) provide accessible educational materials to students with disabilities in a timely manner.

Priority: In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v), this priority is from allowable activities specified in the statute (see sections 674(c) and 681(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 U.S.C. 1474(c) and 1481(d)).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2016 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for  
Individuals with Disabilities--Captioned and Described  
Educational Media.

Background:

Section 674(c) of the IDEA requires, in part, that the Secretary of Education support video description, open captioning, and closed captioning that is appropriate for use in the classroom setting, of (a) television programs; (b) videos; and (c) other materials, including programs and materials associated with new and emerging technologies.

The need to support captioning and video description that is appropriate for use in the classroom setting continues to grow. The National Center for Educational Statistics reports that, in 2009, 69 percent of teachers and students used a computer in the classroom during instructional time (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Students who were once banned from bringing cell phones and other devices to school are now encouraged to "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD) (Atkeson, 2014; Chadband, 2012). Technologies (such as video streaming, digital video recording, digital image processing, and other forms of multimedia) are becoming a more integral part of

instructional practice and are replacing older and less adaptable media sources, such as compact discs (CDs) and digital video discs (DVDs). In order to improve educational outcomes and ensure college- and career-readiness for children with hearing or vision loss, it is critical for them to access educational media by utilizing captioning and video description technologies.

Multimedia and other new and emerging technologies are generally not accessible to students who have hearing or vision impairments because only a small percentage of educational multimedia used in the classroom is captioned or described. Federal requirements for captioning and video description do not apply to many forms of media used specifically in the classroom, even with the expansion of these requirements included in the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010. (See [www.fcc.gov/guides/21st-century-communications-and-video-accessibility-act-2010](http://www.fcc.gov/guides/21st-century-communications-and-video-accessibility-act-2010) for further information.)

The ongoing challenge of ensuring that educational materials in the classroom are accessible to students who have hearing or vision impairments extends to a variety of critical content areas, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and Spanish language

materials. STEM materials are often not in accessible formats, which creates a significant barrier to participation for eligible students who want to study in these critical areas. Likewise, our experience shows that few Spanish language materials are captioned or described, which likewise places unnecessary barriers between eligible students who speak Spanish and a great many instructional materials for the classroom.

In the past, Federal funds were used to purchase the rights to educational films and videos in order to caption and describe media and make it available to eligible users with disabilities. However, recently, the national broadcast television network program providers and Television Access grantees have made some accessible educational television programs available at no cost and available on-demand to children with disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, March 16, 2015). As a result, all media will be secured from program providers at no cost to the project. In exchange, the project will return captioned and described files to the program providers. This cost-saving partnership will ensure that additional Federal funds are available to caption and describe more media and that the media is made available to eligible

users, on-demand, via computers and hand-held devices such as tablets and cell phones.

Captioning and description services funded under this priority are required to keep pace with advancements in new and emerging forms of media and technologies, address STEM content, and also address the needs of students who speak Spanish.

Priority:

The purpose of this priority is to fund a cooperative agreement to support the establishment and operation of an Accessible Learning Center (Center) that will oversee the selection, acquisition, captioning, video description, and distribution of educational media through a free loan service for eligible users. We define eligible users as students, including English learners, in early learning and kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) classroom settings who have hearing or vision impairments and individuals, such as teachers, parents, and paraprofessionals, who are directly involved in these students' early learning or K-12 classroom instruction.

The Center will develop procedures to identify educational media that meet the educational needs of eligible users, including English learners, in early

learning and K-12 classroom settings; make arrangements for the media to be captioned and described; and establish strategies for the free distribution to eligible users. Some of the activities and procedures must focus on selecting titles geared toward improving early learning outcomes for preschool users and using technologies, such as video streaming and other forms of multimedia, to reach eligible users in rural and high-need schools.

Media must be made available at no cost in Spanish for eligible users who are learning English and live in households where Spanish is the dominant language. Access to high-quality instructional media in the STEM academic subjects must be provided. The project must collaborate with the Television Access grantees and the national broadcast television network program providers to make accessible educational television programs available at no cost to the project and available on-demand to eligible users. The process of distribution through the loan service must include making the educational media available through restricted online access for eligible users who are accessing the media via public computers and hand-held devices such as tablets and cell phones.

To be considered for funding under this priority, the applicant must meet the application requirements contained in this priority. The project funded under this priority also must meet the programmatic and administrative requirements specified in the priority.

Application Requirements. An applicant must include in its application--

(a) A logic model that depicts, at a minimum, the goals, activities, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed project. A logic model communicates how a project will achieve its outcomes and provides a framework for both the formative and summative evaluations of the project;

Note: The following Web sites provide more information on logic models:

[www.researchutilization.org/matrix/logicmodel\\_resource3c.html](http://www.researchutilization.org/matrix/logicmodel_resource3c.html) and [www.osepideasthatwork.org/logicModel/index.asp](http://www.osepideasthatwork.org/logicModel/index.asp).

(b) A plan to implement the activities described in the Project Activities section of this priority;

(c) A plan, linked to the proposed project's logic model, for a formative evaluation of the proposed project's activities. The plan must describe how the formative evaluation will use clear performance objectives to ensure continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed



project, including objective measures of progress in implementing the project and ensuring the quality of products and services;

(d) A budget for attendance at the following:

(1) A one and one-half day kick-off meeting to be held in Washington, DC, within four weeks after receipt of the award, and an annual planning meeting held in Washington, DC, with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) project officer during each subsequent year of the project period.

(2) A three-day project directors' meeting in Washington, DC, during each year of the project period.

(3) A two-day trip annually to attend Department briefings, Department-sponsored conferences, and other meetings, as requested by OSEP; and

(e) A line item in the proposed budget for an annual set-aside of five percent of the annual grant amount to support emerging needs that are consistent with the proposed project's activities, as those needs are identified in consultation with OSEP.

Note: With approval from the OSEP project officer, the Center must reallocate any remaining funds from this annual

set-aside no later than the end of the third quarter of each budget period.

Project Activities. To meet the requirements of this priority, the Center, at a minimum, must conduct the following activities:

(a) Develop and implement a plan for operating a free online media loan service distribution system to make it possible for eligible users to easily borrow media from the loan service or to secure restricted access, on-demand, to media via computers and hand-held devices such as tablets and cell phones;

(b) Establish and make available computerized registration and application procedures, accessible via the Internet, that will be used to register eligible users for media access, deliver the captioned and described media material, and track and record consumer feedback and usage information;

(c) Implement strategies and procedures for identifying and prioritizing educational media that are not currently readily accessible to students, but are appropriate for eligible users attending early learning programs and elementary and secondary schools, including

English learners, that meet the educational needs of those students;

(d) Select media to closely match the educational needs of eligible users, taking into account the media most commonly used in school districts and early learning programs across the Nation;

(e) Implement a plan to recommend media to the OSEP Project Officer for review;

(f) Make arrangements with program producers and distributors for the Center to acquire (at no cost) the rights to caption, describe, and distribute selected media, including distribution in alternate formats, such as video streaming;

(g) Develop strategies and procedures for identifying, prioritizing, and securing the rights (at no cost) to previously captioned and described children's television programs that are appropriate for eligible users, including English learners, that meet the educational needs of those students and continue to make those programs available through this free loan service on-demand;

(h) For media that has been secured but not previously captioned or described, prepare quality captions

and descriptions, taking into account the grade or developmental level of the material, as well as the age and vocabulary level of the likely target audience;

(i) Ensure that 25 percent of the materials to be captioned or described are materials in STEM fields;

(j) Ensure that 25 percent of the media acquired annually is captioned and described in Spanish at no cost for eligible users who are learning English and live in households where Spanish is the dominant language;

(k) Develop and implement quality control standards and procedures for media after it has been captioned and described;

(l) Provide captioned and described files to producers and distributors so that they are able to continue to make the media directly accessible to interested parties beyond the eligible users who will be served under this program;

(m) Provide free-of-charge disk copies of media, if requested by eligible users, in order to reach children with hearing or vision impairments in rural settings or in schools with limited broadband support;

(n) Identify and, as appropriate, utilize alternate delivery methods and vehicles for media access, as new and emerging technologies become available for classroom use;

(o) Prepare, update, and utilize an online catalog listing all captioned and described media available under this project as they become available;

(p) Maintain a Web site that meets government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility;

(q) Establish and maintain a stakeholder panel of at least seven members, which shall meet annually, and include video producers and distributors, captioning and description service providers, parents and families of students with hearing or vision loss, public and private school administrators, and other educational personnel. This panel must provide feedback to the project regarding the usefulness of program activities and services, taking into consideration the input from consumers, and review the Center's media acquisition, captioning, description, and distribution process in order to ensure maximum effectiveness of the project;

(r) Develop and maintain a comprehensive online searchable database containing information related to the availability of captioned and described educational media,

information regarding the captioned and described media loan service, requirements governing the use of captioned and described media available from the loan service, and a list of captioning and description service providers. In addition, the project shall maintain a clearinghouse of information on the subject of captioning and description for use by consumers, agencies, corporations, businesses, schools, and other interested stakeholders;

(s) Develop strategies and use technologies for improving the Center's effectiveness by replacing out-of-date media with media containing more current information (where appropriate);

(t) Use and upgrade technologies to caption and describe selected media as newer technologies emerge;

(u) Select media that are intended to improve early learning outcomes for preschool children who are eligible users; and

(v) Develop and implement strategies to reach eligible users attending rural and high-need schools.

Fourth and Fifth Years of the Project:

In deciding whether to continue funding this project for the fourth and fifth years, the Secretary will consider the requirements of 34 CFR 75.253(a), as well as--

(a) The recommendation of a review team consisting of experts selected by the Secretary. This intensive review will be conducted during a one-day intensive meeting in Washington, DC, that will be held during the last half of the second year of the project period;

(b) The timeliness and effectiveness with which all requirements of the negotiated cooperative agreement have been or are being met by the Center; and

(c) The quality, relevance, and usefulness of the Center's activities and products and the degree to which the Center's activities and products have contributed to an increased number of available accessible educational media for students with hearing or vision impairments.

References:

- Atkeson, S. (2014). N.Y.C. Schools to Open Doors to Student Cellphones. Education Week, October 28, 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2014/10/29/10cellphone.h34.html>.
- Chadband, E. (2012). Should Schools Embrace "Bring Your Own Device"? NEA Today, July 19, 2012. Retrieved from <http://NEAToday.org/2012/07/19/should-schools-embrace-bring-your-own-device/>.

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. (2010). Teachers' Use of Educational Technology in U.S. Public Schools: 2009 (NCES 2010-040). Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=46>.

U.S. Department of Education. (2015, March 16). Video-on-Demand Children's TV Programming Now Accessible for Thousands of Students with Visual or Hearing Disabilities [Press release]. Retrieved from [www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/video-demand-children%E2%80%99s-tv-programming-now-accessible-thousands-students-visual-or-hearing-disabilities](http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/video-demand-children%E2%80%99s-tv-programming-now-accessible-thousands-students-visual-or-hearing-disabilities).

Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking: Under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities and requirements. Section 681(d) of IDEA, however, makes the public comment requirements of the APA inapplicable to the priority in this notice.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1474 and 1481.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and



Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian tribes.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to institutions of higher education (IHEs) only.

## II. Award Information

Type of Award: Cooperative agreement.

Estimated Available Funds: The Administration has requested \$28,047,000 for the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities program for FY 2016, of which we intend to use an estimated \$2,000,000 for this competition. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in

FY 2017 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Maximum Award: We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding \$2,000,000 for a single budget period of 12 months.

Estimated Number of Awards: 1.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 36 months with an optional additional 24 months based on performance. Applications must include plans for both the 36-month award and the 24-month extension.

### III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: State educational agencies (SEAs); local educational agencies (LEAs), including public charter schools that are considered LEAs under State law; IHEs; other public agencies; private nonprofit organizations; freely associated States and outlying areas; Indian tribes or tribal organizations; and for-profit organizations.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

3. Eligible Subgrantees: (a) Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c) a grantee may award subgrants--to directly carry out project activities described in its application--to the following types of entities: SEAs; LEAs, including public charter schools that are considered LEAs under State law; IHEs; other public agencies; private nonprofit organizations; freely associated States and outlying areas; Indian tribes or tribal organizations; and for-profit organizations suitable to carry out the activities proposed in the application.

(b) The grantee may award subgrants only to entities it has identified in an approved application.

4. Other General Requirements: (a) Recipients of funding under this competition must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities (see section 606 of IDEA).

(b) Each applicant for, and recipient of, funding under this program must involve individuals with disabilities, or parents of individuals with disabilities ages birth through 26, in planning, implementing, and evaluating the project (see section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA).

#### IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package: You can obtain an application package via the Internet or from the Education Publications Center (ED Pubs). To obtain a copy via the Internet, use the following address: [www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html). To obtain a copy from ED Pubs, write, fax, or call: ED Pubs, U.S. Department of Education, P.O. Box 22207, Alexandria, VA 22304. Telephone, toll free: 1-877-433-7827. FAX: (703) 605-6794. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call, toll free: 1-877-576-7734.

You can contact ED Pubs at its Web site, also: [www.EDPubs.gov](http://www.EDPubs.gov) or at its email address: [edpubs@inet.ed.gov](mailto:edpubs@inet.ed.gov).

If you request an application package from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this competition as follows: CFDA number 84.327N.

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) by contacting the person or team listed under Accessible Format in section VIII of this notice.

## 2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this competition.

Page Limit: The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit Part III to no more than 70 pages, using the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, reference citations, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.
- Use a font that is 12 point or larger.
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. An application submitted in any other font (including Times Roman or Arial Narrow) will not be accepted.

The page limit and double-spacing requirements do not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget

section, including the narrative budget justification; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the abstract (follow the guidance provided in the application package for completing the abstract), the table of contents, the list of priority requirements, the resumes, the reference list, the letters of support, or the appendices. However, the page limit and double-spacing requirements do apply to all of Part III, the application narrative, including all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

We will reject your application if you exceed the page limit in the application narrative section or if you apply standards other than those specified in this notice and the application package.

### 3. Submission Dates and Times:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (Grants.gov). For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery if you qualify for an

exception to the electronic submission requirement, please refer to Other Submission Requirements in section IV of this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 120 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

4. Intergovernmental Review: This competition is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

5. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

6. Data Universal Numbering System Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, and System for Award Management: To do business with the Department of Education, you must--

a. Have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);

b. Register both your DUNS number and TIN with the System for Award Management (SAM) (formerly the Central Contractor Registry), the Government's primary registrant database;

c. Provide your DUNS number and TIN on your application; and

d. Maintain an active SAM registration with current information while your application is under review by the Department and, if you are awarded a grant, during the project period.

You can obtain a DUNS number from Dun and Bradstreet at the following Web site: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. A DUNS number can be created within one to two business days.



If you are a corporate entity, agency, institution, or organization, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service. If you are an individual, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service or the Social Security Administration. If you need a new TIN, please allow two to five weeks for your TIN to become active.

The SAM registration process can take approximately seven business days, but may take upwards of several weeks, depending on the completeness and accuracy of the data you enter into the SAM database. Thus, if you think you might want to apply for Federal financial assistance under a program administered by the Department, please allow sufficient time to obtain and register your DUNS number and TIN. We strongly recommend that you register early.

Note: Once your SAM registration is active, it may be 24 to 48 hours before you can access the information in, and submit an application through, Grants.gov.

If you are currently registered with SAM, you may not need to make any changes. However, please make certain that the TIN associated with your DUNS number is correct. Also note that you will need to update your registration annually. This may take three or more business days.

Information about SAM is available at [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov). To further assist you with obtaining and registering your DUNS number and TIN in SAM or updating your existing SAM account, we have prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet, which you can find at: <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html>.

In addition, if you are submitting your application via Grants.gov, you must (1) be designated by your organization as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (2) register yourself with Grants.gov as an AOR. Details on these steps are outlined at the following Grants.gov Web page:  
[www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html).

7. Other Submission Requirements: Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically unless you qualify for an exception to this requirement in accordance with the instructions in this section.

a. Electronic Submission of Applications.

Applications for grants under the Captioned and Described Educational Media competition, CFDA number 84.327N, must be submitted electronically using the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit your application. You may not email an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

We will reject your application if you submit it in paper format unless, as described elsewhere in this section, you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. Further information regarding calculation of the date that is two weeks before the application deadline date is provided later in this section under Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement.

You may access the electronic grant application for the Captioned and Described Educational Media competition at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). You must search for the downloadable application package for this competition by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.327, not 84.327N).

Please note the following:

- When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.

- Applications received by Grants.gov are date and time stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not accept your application if it is received--that is, date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system--after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements. When we retrieve your application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

- The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors, including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. Therefore, we strongly recommend that

you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

- You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov that are included in the application package for this competition to ensure that you submit your application in a timely manner to the Grants.gov system. You can also find the Education Submission Procedures pertaining to Grants.gov under News and Events on the Department's G5 system home page at [www.G5.gov](http://www.G5.gov). In addition, for specific guidance and procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov, please refer to the Grants.gov Web site at: [www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html).

- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, as described elsewhere in this section, and submit your application in paper format.

- You must submit all documents electronically, including all information you typically provide on the following forms: the Application for Federal Assistance

(SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, Budget Information--Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- You must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in a read-only, non-modifiable Portable Document Format (PDF). Do not upload an interactive or fillable PDF file. If you upload a file type other than a read-only, non-modifiable PDF (e.g., Word, Excel, WordPerfect, etc.) or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material. Please note that this could result in your application not being considered for funding because the material in question--for example, the project narrative--is critical to a meaningful review of your proposal. For that reason it is important to allow yourself adequate time to upload all material as PDF files. The Department will not convert material from other formats to PDF. Additional, detailed information on how to attach files is in the application instructions.

- Your electronic application must comply with any page-limit requirements described in this notice.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive from Grants.gov an automatic notification of receipt that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. This notification indicates receipt by Grants.gov only, not receipt by the Department. Grants.gov will also notify you automatically by email if your application met all the Grants.gov validation requirements or if there were any errors (such as submission of your application by someone other than a registered Authorized Organization Representative, or inclusion of an attachment with a file name that contains special characters). You will be given an opportunity to correct any errors and resubmit, but you must still meet the deadline for submission of applications.

Once your application is successfully validated by Grants.gov, the Department will retrieve your application from Grants.gov and send you an email with a unique PR/Award number for your application.

These emails do not mean that your application is without any disqualifying errors. While your application may have been successfully validated by Grants.gov, it must also meet the Department's application requirements as specified in this notice and in the application

instructions. Disqualifying errors could include, for instance, failure to upload attachments in a read-only, non-modifiable PDF; failure to submit a required part of the application; or failure to meet applicant eligibility requirements. It is your responsibility to ensure that your submitted application has met all of the Department's requirements.

- We may request that you provide us original signatures on forms at a later date.

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of Technical Issues with the Grants.gov System: If you are experiencing problems submitting your application through Grants.gov, please contact the Grants.gov Support Desk, toll free, at 1-800-518-4726. You must obtain a Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number and must keep a record of it.

If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because of technical problems with the Grants.gov system, we will grant you an extension until 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, the following business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically or by hand delivery. You also may mail your application by following the mailing instructions described elsewhere in this notice.



If you submit an application after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date, please contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice and provide an explanation of the technical problem you experienced with Grants.gov, along with the Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number. We will accept your application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system and that the problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We will contact you after we determine whether your application will be accepted.

Note: The extensions to which we refer in this section apply only to the unavailability of, or technical problems with, the Grants.gov system. We will not grant you an extension if you failed to fully register to submit your application to Grants.gov before the application deadline date and time or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to the Grants.gov system.

Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement: You qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, and may submit your application in paper

format, if you are unable to submit an application through the Grants.gov system because--

- You do not have access to the Internet; or
- You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to the Grants.gov system;

and

- No later than two weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day before the application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), you mail or fax a written statement to the Department, explaining which of the two grounds for an exception prevents you from using the Internet to submit your application.

If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax your written statement to the Department, we must receive the faxed statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.

Address and mail or fax your statement to: Jo Ann McCann, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5162, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-

2600. FAX: (202) 245-7590.

Your paper application must be submitted in accordance with the mail or hand delivery instructions described in this notice.

b. Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you may mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) your application to the Department. You must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education  
Application Control Center  
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.327N)  
LBJ Basement Level 1  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.  
Washington, DC 20202-4260

You must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

(1) A private metered postmark.

(2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

We will not consider applications postmarked after the application deadline date.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must deliver the original and two copies of your application by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education  
Application Control Center  
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.327N)  
550 12th Street, SW.  
Room 7039, Potomac Center Plaza  
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications: If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department--

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

#### V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are listed in the application package.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any

discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. Additional Review and Selection Process Factors:

In the past, the Department has had difficulty finding peer reviewers for certain competitions because so many individuals who are eligible to serve as peer reviewers have conflicts of interest. The standing panel requirements under section 682(b) of IDEA also have placed additional constraints on the availability of reviewers. Therefore, the Department has determined that for some discretionary grant competitions, applications may be

separated into two or more groups and ranked and selected for funding within specific groups. This procedure will make it easier for the Department to find peer reviewers by ensuring that greater numbers of individuals who are eligible to serve as reviewers for any particular group of applicants will not have conflicts of interest. It also will increase the quality, independence, and fairness of the review process, while permitting panel members to review applications under discretionary grant competitions for which they also have submitted applications. However, if the Department decides to select an equal number of applications in each group for funding, this may result in different cut-off points for fundable applications in each group.

4. Risk Assessment and Special Conditions:

Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose special conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in

2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

## VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place



the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to [www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html](http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html).

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection analysis and reporting. In this case the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

4. Performance Measures: Under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), the Department has established a set of performance measures, including long-term measures, that are designed to yield information on various aspects of the effectiveness and quality of the

Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities Program. These measures are included in the application package and focus on the extent to which projects are of high quality, are relevant to improving outcomes of children with disabilities, contribute to improving outcomes for children with disabilities, and generate evidence of validity and availability to appropriate populations. Projects funded under this competition are required to submit data on these measures as directed by OSEP.

Grantees will be required to report information on their project's performance in annual performance reports and additional performance data to the Department (34 CFR 75.590 and 75.591).

5. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

#### VII. Agency Contact

For Further Information Contact: Jo Ann McCann, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., room 5162, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-2600. Telephone: (202) 245-7434.

If you use a TDD or a TTY, call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

#### VIII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) by contacting the Grants and Contracts Services Team, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., room 5037, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-2550. Telephone: (202) 245-7363. If

you use a TDD or a TTY, call the FRS, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the Federal Register. Free Internet access to the official edition of the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations is available via the Federal Digital System at: [www.gpo.gov/fdsys](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys). At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the Federal Register, in text or PDF. To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the Federal Register by using the article search feature at: [www.federalregister.gov](http://www.federalregister.gov). Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated: December 21, 2015.

---

Michael K. Yudin,  
Assistant Secretary for Special  
Education and Rehabilitative  
Services.

[FR Doc. 2015-32508 Filed: 12/23/2015 8:45 am; Publication Date: 12/24/2015]